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25X1A [redacted]

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SUMMARY

SOVIET UNION

1. Comments from London on stability of Soviet leadership (page 3).

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3. Withdrawal of two Chinese Communist armies from North Korea indicated (page 4).

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SOVIET UNION

1. Comments from London on stability of Soviet leadership:

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The American embassy in London reports that observers there, including Foreign Office officials, regard the latest shifts in the Soviet government as further evidence of instability within the top leadership and as having the effect of isolating Malenkov. They believe that there is probably an uneasy balance between the "party machine," presently led by Khrushchev, certain "government forces" and some regular army generals.

The consensus is that the power factor became decisive in the Malenkov-Khrushchev dispute once the issue had been joined over economic policy. Given the ambitious domestic and foreign goals established by the Bolsheviks, the very small ruling group is permanently faced with "deep issues demanding appalling decisions." When there is no all-powerful arbiter and vital issues are involved, these decisions become more difficult to reach. Throughout the history of the Communist Party, stability and unity have been sought mainly through struggle and purge, and there has been an almost inevitable tendency for one man to feel obliged to become the final court of appeal.

Comment: These observations are consistent with a British view expressed in January that a "struggle for power" is inherent in the nature of the Soviet regime. The British expect further instability in the Soviet leadership.

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3. Withdrawal of two Chinese Communist armies from North Korea indicated:

Over 55,000 Chinese Communist troops left North Korea between 19 and 27 February, [redacted]

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If the present rate of redeployment is maintained through 5 March, as is expected, the equivalent of about two Chinese Communist armies will have withdrawn from North Korea in the current movement.

Comment: The withdrawal of two Chinese armies would leave only seven in North Korea, where 19 were stationed at the time of the armistice.

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As yet there is no information to indicate the ultimate destination of the departing troops, or whether they will be replaced.

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